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Language problems and politics in post-independence India.

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Abstract: Immediately after India's independence, the "language problem" emerged as a very sensitive political issue in Indian politics. It was not uncommon for such a problem to arise at that time in a multilingual country like India, which had just tasted independence. The people expected the political leadership and the framers of the constitution at that time to be sincere in their efforts for a lasting solution to this problem. This is because such a problem is not only inconsistent with the idea of national unity in India, but also a threat to India's national unity in the future. But the unfortunate truth is that the framers of the Constitution have been unable to find a lasting solution to this problem. Similarly, at different times later, different governments of the country could not bring a permanent solution to this 'language problem'. The answer to the question of what will be the state language of the country is still unresolved. This article discusses the debate on "official language" in the Constituent Assembly, the constitutional statute on language and "state restructuring on the basis of language". It also discusses how the politics of language-identity has become relevant in recent times in India through the "National Education Policy Debate", "One Language, One State" debate.

Keywords: official language, eighth schedule, Hindi Heartland, South India, Patti Sriramulu, Dhar Commission, JVP Committee, State Reorganization Commission, National Education Policy, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK).

Introduction: One of the major components of nationalism is language. Language plays a very important role in building national unity in any country. Therefore, language has a special significance for any state. However, from the point of view of national unity, one or more languages are desirable for a state. According to Machiavelli, a state needs to have a common language, which will facilitate the establishment of national unity. Gandhiji, in the interest of state unity, was in favor of having a common language instead of a multilingual one in a state like Machiavelli. Conversely, there are many people who never think that national unity is endangered if a state has more than one language. According to them, in many countries, including Switzerland, Britain, France and Canada, multiple languages have been recognized as official languages and their national unity has not been compromised or obstructed in the way of nationalism.

India is a multilingual country. According to the 2011 census, there are about 19,500 mother tongues in India. Of these, 121 are languages spoken by more than 10,000 people. Hindi is the mother tongue of most Indians (43.83%).

This is followed by Bengali (8.03%) and Marathi (8.8%) respectively. Needless to say, in a multilingual country like India, it is very difficult to decide which language to choose as the state or official language.

Debate on official language in the Constituent Assembly:

English was the only official language in colonial British India. At that time there was no problem with language. But soon after India's independence, the question of what would be the official language in India sparked a heated debate among Hindi and non-Hindi-speaking members of the Constituent Assembly. Proponents of Hindi demanded that Hindi be declared the official language. The reason was their argument in favor of Hindi - firstly, Hindi is the mother tongue of the majority of Indians, secondly, recognizing Hindi as the official language will facilitate the establishment of national unity and solidarity in India, thirdly, it will be easier to maintain linkages between government and countrymen. Lokmanya Tilak, Chakraborty Rajagopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel and others were among the supporters of Hindi language. Participating in the debate, Seth Govinda Das asked for one language, saying, "Hindi should replace English as soon as possible. Democracy is about respecting the opinion of the majority. If we disagree, there should be a vote. The decision of the majority should be accepted with respect for the minority... we have accepted the idea of a secular state, but we have never thought that we have to accept a multifaceted culture. India is an ancient country, the history of this country is also ancient. Ancient culture has been flowing in this country for thousands of years. He wants a language and a font all over the country to maintain the tradition. There are two cultures here, we don't want to hear that." RV Dhulekar said, "You can be a person of any other nation, but I am of Indian nation, Hindi nation, Hindustani nation. I don't know why you say Hindi is not the national language. I shudder to think that our universities, our schools, our scientists are still working in English even after Swaraj came to the country.

Non-Hindi-speaking members, on the other hand, vehemently opposed the recognition of Hindi as the official language and demanded the recognition of English as the official language. Their arguments were - firstly, recognition of Hindi as the official language in India would establish dominance of Hindi over other languages all over India, secondly, Hindi speakers would get more privileges in various official and competitive examinations and non-Hindi speakers would lag behind in the competition. English has been used as a language of administrative work for a long time, so if Hindi is made the official language instead of English, then there will be problems. Taking part in the debate, T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar said, "This is a very difficult question. To the South, it is probably a question of life and death." Refusing to accept Hindi as the national language, he said, "Hindi is nothing more national to us than English or any other language." SV Krishnamurthy Rao said, "Hindi is an inferior language to many South Indian languages. Hindi and Hindustani are absolutely the answer. Jawaharlal Nehru was not in favor of imposing Hindi on the people. He saw the authoritarian attitude among the supporters of the Hindi language and said, "This is not just a wrong view, it is a dangerous view. "

After much debate, the draft finally raised by Munshi-Iyengar was adopted after more than three hundred amendments. Chapter 17 of the Indian Constitution (PART-XVII) was enacted on the basis of this proposal. Sections 343 to 351 of this chapter discuss language in detail.

Provisions regarding language in the Indian Constitution: Articles 343 to 351 of the Indian Constitution (PART-XVII) deal with the "official language". This seventeenth chapter is again divided into four chapters. Chapter 1: Official Language of the Center (Section 343-344), Chapter 2: Regional Language (Section 345-347), Chapter 3: Language of the Supreme Court and High Court (Section 348-349), Chapter 4: Special instructions on language are discussed. Article 343 of the Indian Constitution states that Hindi written in Devanagari script will be considered as the official language of the Center, Numerals used in official functions will be the international form of Indian numerals, English will be used in official functions as before till 15 years after the promulgation of the Constitution. Can extend the period. Article 344 states that for the first time in five years after the promulgation of the Constitution and every 10 years thereafter, the President shall constitute a Language Commission.

State restructuring on the basis of language

The history of division of provinces on the basis of language is very old. The provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were formed on the basis of language during the British rule in 1937. After independence, the new constitution of India did not say much about the reorganization of the state on the basis of language. The Government of India later constituted a committee in 1947 headed by Justice S. K. Dhar of the Allahabad High Court to look into the matter. The committee opposed the proposal to reorganize the state on the basis of language and opined that the state should be reorganized on the basis of administrative convenience. As a result, a strong movement was started to form a state based on language, especially in South India. Considering the situation, the Government of India constituted a committee (JVP committee) headed by Jaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbai Patel, Pattavi Sitaramaiah in 1947 to re-examine the matter. This committee also rejected the proposal to reorganize the state on the basis of language. Then a strong movement was started for the formation of Andhra Pradesh as a separate state on the basis of language. After the death of a freedom fighter and Congress activist named Patti Sriramalu after a 58-day hunger strike, the government came under intense pressure and formed Andhra Pradesh on the basis of first language in October 1953. As a result, in other parts of India, the demand for statehood on the basis of language began to grow. Under such circumstances, the Government of India formed the Fazil Ali Commission in 1953. The Commission accepted the proposal to reorganize the states on the basis of language subject to certain conditions. As per the recommendations of this commission, the Government of India passed the "State Reorganization Act, 1956" and the first 14 States and 6 Union Territories were formed on the basis of language. However, this is not the end, since then, multiple language-based states have been formed at different times in recognition of the demand for language-based states. The "United Maharashtra Movement" led by Keshab Sitaram Thackeray resulted in the dissolution of the Bombay Presidency in 1960 and the formation of 'Maharashtra' and 'Gujarat' on the basis of language. In 1986, PEPSU was dissolved and separate provinces of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh were formed on the basis of language. The states of Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram were formed in 1972 along ethnic and linguistic lines in northeastern India. The last time Andhra Pradesh was formed was in 2014 when Telangana was formed.

The politics that began immediately after independence with the movement for the formation of a separate state of Andhra Pradesh, giving priority to language identity in India, has not ended. At present, there is a movement in different parts of India to form separate states on the basis of ethnicity and language identity.

Efforts to solve the language problem in India and the anti-Hindi language movement

In post-independence India, five years after the enactment of the Constitution, a Language Commission was formed in 1955 under the leadership of BG Kher to study the progress of the Hindi language. This commission reported in 1956. The report recommends further emphasis on the promotion of Hindi language in government work. It also recommends the use of Hindi as the medium of communication between the states and the regional languages in the administrative functions of the states. Although the primary education is given in the regional language, the language commission recommends teaching at the secondary level through Hindi. The report of this commission was submitted to the Joint Committee of Parliament in 1956. The Joint Committee also agreed with the report of the Language Commission and announced that after 1975, Hindi would be the main official language and English would be the auxiliary language. The announcement by the joint committee angered the people of the non-Hindi-speaking region and sparked protests in the southern states. Under pressure from the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, on September 4, 1959, he declared in Parliament that Hindi would never be imposed on non-Hindi-speaking states, and that non-Hindi-speaking states could continue to use their own language as long as they deem necessary. Then President Dr. Rajendra Prasad issued an order in 1980 to implement the recommendations of the Joint Committee. The order said that it was compulsory for any government employee under the Center to know Hindi. Protests in non-Hindi speaking states intensified with the President's announcement. The government of West Bengal declared Bengali as the official language of the rest of the state except Darjeeling. During the discussion of the Language Bill in Parliament in 1983, the Members of Parliament of South India and Bengal strongly argued for the retention of English. Finally, an agreement was reached on the basis

of which the Official Language Act was introduced in 1973. This law was originally intended to satisfy all Hindi and non-Hindi speakers. With an emphasis on inclusive nationalism, Nehru gave a personal assurance in Parliament that there would be no attempt to impose Hindi in non-Hindi-speaking states. This law angers the people of non-Hindi speaking states. In South India in particular, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) political party led a massive protest rally. The DMK called the law an attempt at Hindi imperialism and called for a direct struggle against the law and publicly burned Chapter 17 of the Constitution. After the death of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1974, Gulzarilal Nanda, the then Home Minister of India and a staunch supporter of the Hindi language, issued a new guideline asking other Union Ministers to see how much progress had been made in the use of Hindi in government work. When news of the directive reached Tamil Nadu, there were massive student protests, riots and suicides, and protests spread across South India. Protests were organized in West Bengal against this directive. As a result, the then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri announced in a radio address in 1975 that as long as the people were willing to use the language, they could use it as a substitute. The Union Minister and the Chief Ministers of all the states met in Delhi in June 1975 to resolve the issue. An agreement was reached at this meeting that Hindi would never be imposed on non-Hindi-speaking states. It was on the basis of this significant and historic agreement of 1975 that the "Official Language Act, 198" was introduced. The Act states that both Hindi and English may be used in the Indian Parliament, the language of communication between the Center and the Hindi-speaking states shall be Hindi and English may be used for communication between the Center and non-Hindi-speaking states. The Act further states that examinations for all-India jobs can be given in both Hindi and English languages. Although the law is somewhat able to quell the protests of the people of non-Hindi speaking areas, it is unable to provide them with full satisfaction.

The politics of language-identity in recent times: The history of the Hindi-language controversy in India is very old, but after Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister for the second time in 2019, the controversy seems to have resurfaced on various issues.

"National Education Policy Debate":

In June 2019, "Draft National Education Policy, 2019" was published under the leadership of Dr. K. Kasturirangan, eminent former astronomer of the country. In this draft, it was recommended to make Hindi compulsory till the eighth standard. As a result, protests and demonstrations were organized in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, West Bengal and Maharashtra against this proposal. In Tamil Nadu in particular, almost all political parties oppose the proposal. The trend on social media is 'hashtag stophindimposition'. DMK leader Kanimozhi reacted strongly against the proposal, saying, "We will not accept any attempt to impose Hindi in such a detour. Our party is also ready to go to court if necessary to stop Hindi." Other Tamil politicians like Kamal Hasan, Vaiko, Ramodas also opposed it. Seeing that the situation was not favorable, the central government stepped back and said that there was no question of taking a final decision without the consent of the people.

Debate on "One Language, One State"

Hindi Language Day has been celebrated in India on 14th September every year since 1953. Most recently, on the occasion of 'Hindi Language Day' on September 14, 2019, the controversy started when Union Home Minister Amit Shah asked for 'One State, One Language'. He said that only Hindi language can unite India. Therefore, importance should be given to the spread of Hindi language. However, as he said, there are many language-speaking people living in India and each language has its own place of importance. After this statement of the Home Minister, there was a strong reaction all over the country. However, the most turbulent is South India. Tamil Nadu DMK leader M. K. Stalin said at the time that he would not accept Hindi imperialism in any way and that he had to explain why the Home Minister had identified Hindi as a language. Otherwise they will start language movement again. Opposing the idea of "one language, one state", West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said, "We should respect all languages and cultures. We can learn many languages, but we should not forget our mother tongue. Actor and political figure Kamal Hasan has spoken out against the attempt to make Hindi the national language. The head of the Makkal Nidhi Miyam (MNM) said that at the time of the formation of the Republic of India, there was a

commitment to maintain unity among the diversity of all the states. Anger over that diversity will start a 'language war' against the government. Opposing Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Amit Shah's proposal, he said all the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution should be treated as national languages and all national languages should be treated equally. Attempts to impose a language would be dangerous to national unity and solidarity. Opposing Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks, Congress leader Kapil Sibal said, "We may have one state-one tax system, one state-one electoral system but under no circumstances can there be one state one culture, one state one language. Sociologist. Ashis Nandi said, "It is not possible for Amit Shah to understand what language love is. He is talking about tying the country up with Hindi, but in fact it will lead to division."

Conclusion: India is a multi-lingual country, the people of this country speak different languages. We must not forget that this linguistic diversity is our identity and each language has its own importance. Article 29 of the Constitution of India gives all classes of citizens the right to preserve their own specific language, script and culture. So there is no opportunity to impose any particular language on others. In order to solve the language problem, Hindi imperialist mentality and anti-Hindi mentality must be changed. At the same time, the opportunity to teach all languages through mother tongue should be increased with equal status. Beside this, it is important to adopt a realistic language policy with emphasis on Indian culture and, most importantly, the political will that must be brought between the political parties. Only then can we find a solution to the language problem.

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